

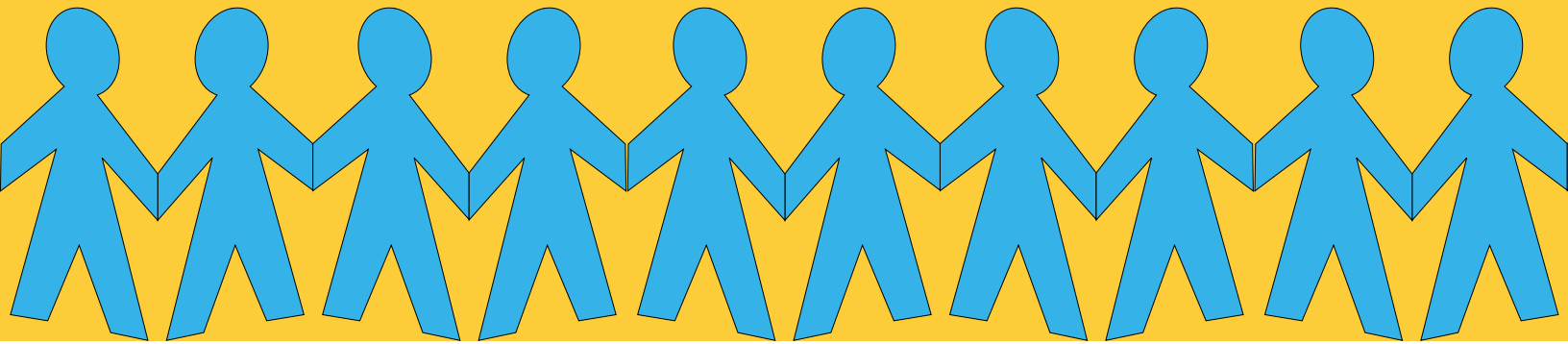


EFMP

Exceptional Family Member Program

Henderson Hall Marine Corps Community Services

AUGUST 2025



Hello,

AUGUST

**Hello EFMP Families,
As we savor the final weeks of
summer and gear up for a busy
fall, August brings new energy
and exciting opportunities for
growth, connection, and
community engagement across
the DMV region. Whether you're
new to the area or deeply rooted
here, EFMP is here to help you
thrive.**

NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

Meet the EFMP Team

Summer Fruits & Sensory Fun

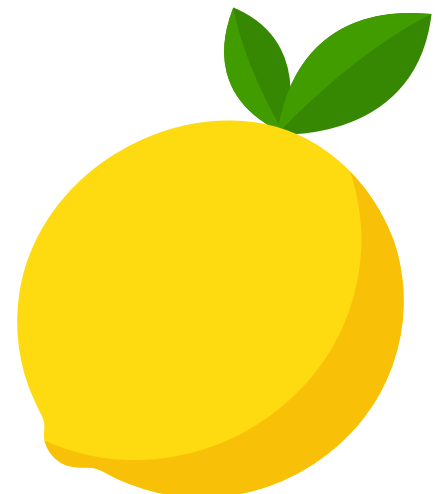
Henderson Hall- EFMP Fire House Tour

United Through Reading & Dolly Parton

Community Resources

Loan Library Monthly Feature

EFMP FAQ



MEET THE TEAM

Welcome Tamela!

EFMP Family Caseworker: Tamela Brown

About:

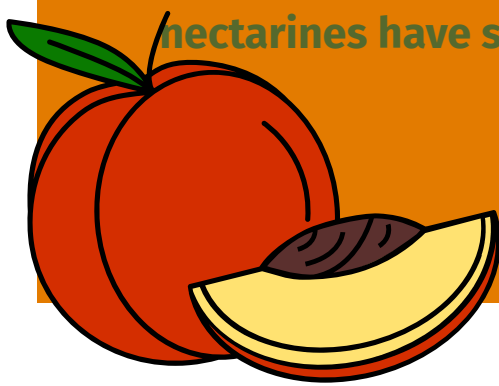
We are excited to welcome Tamela back to MCCS! She joins us from ACS Fort Belvoir, where she served as the EFMP Systems Navigator. In her new role, Tamela will serve as the EFMP Family Case Worker, supporting families stationed in Virginia and Washington, D.C. Tamela previously held the same role at Quantico and brings a wealth of experience and a deep passion for supporting military families with special needs. We look forward to her enthusiasm and dedication as she continues to make a positive impact in the EFMP community.

Fun Fact:

Tamela was born a twin and loves to crochet! She especially loves to crochet blankets for her friends and family.

Favorite Fruit:

Nectarine- type of fruit, closely related to the peach. It looks and tastes very similar to a peach, but the key difference is: nectarines have smooth skin, while peaches have fuzzy skin.



Contact:

703-693-6368



Seasonal Eating & Sensory Fun for Kids with Special Needs

Summer's fresh fruits—like watermelon, peaches, cucumbers, and strawberries—offer more than vitamins. For kids with sensory sensitivities or feeding challenges, fruit can be a playful, low-pressure way to explore new tastes, textures, and smells.

Why It Helps:

Textures: Crunchy, soft, or slippery—variety helps build comfort with different sensations.

Colors & Scents: Bright, sweet fruits engage visual and smell-based sensory systems.

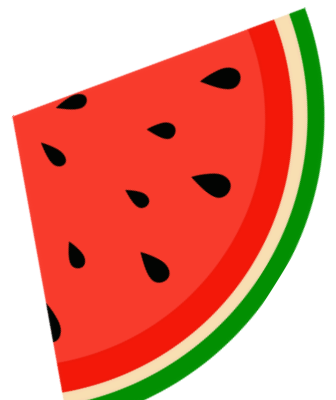
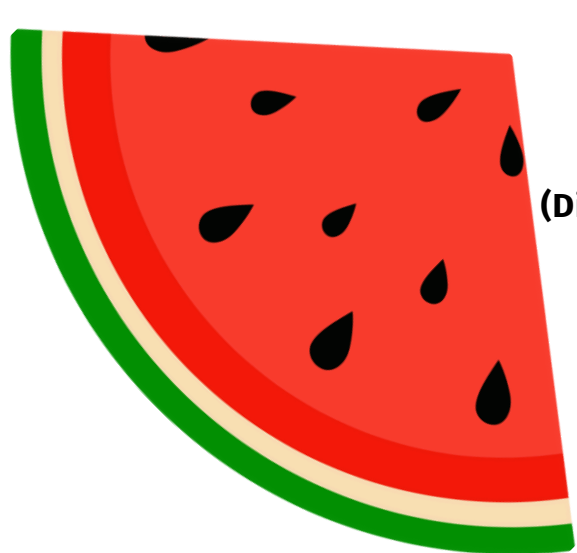
Tactile Play: Slicing, peeling, or squishing fruit is fun—even if they're not ready to eat it.

Try This:

- Let your child help wash, cut, or arrange fruit.
- Offer frozen fruits as cool sensory snacks.
- Make fruit art—use shapes, smiley faces, or patterns on a plate!
- Even simple fruit play can support sensory development and potentially ease picky eating over time

Curious about sensory-friendly feeding? Local programs like [The Arc of Northern Virginia](#) and [Ivymount Outreach](#) offer resources and family workshops.

(Disclaimer: The inclusion of community resources is for informational purposes only and does not constitute endorsement.)



UPCOMING EFMP EVENTS in the DMV

Hosted by Family Support EFMP Fort Meade



EFMP Family Bowling Night Recreational Opportunity for Families Enrolled in EFMP

When: Third Friday of the month

Time: 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Location: The Lanes on Fort Meade, 2788 MacArthur Rd, Fort Meade, MD 20755

Registration required: register online at

<https://forms.osi.apps.mil/r/UPwbuaMYkX>, email usarmy.meade.usag.mbx.acs-efmp@army.mil, or to sign up for this event. This event is open to EFMP enrolled Families.



Fort MYER



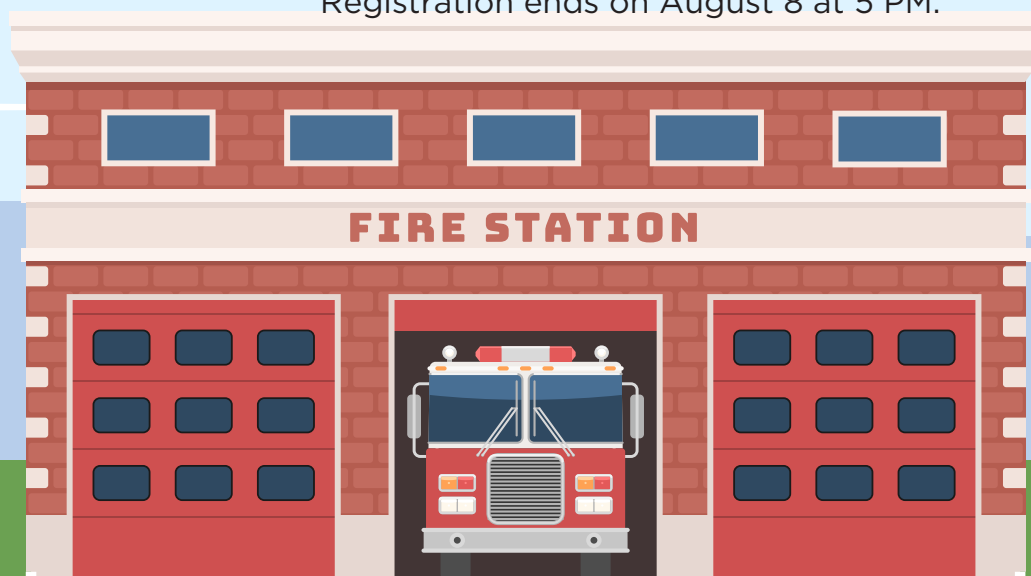
FIRE STATION

Join Henderson Hall EFMP for a sensory-friendly visit to our local fire station. Go behind the scenes to tour the firehouse, meet the firefighters and get up close to the firetrucks.

Saturday, August 9

9:30 - 11:30AM

Registration ends on August 8 at 5 PM.



**REGISTER
HERE**



Bldg. 415, Sheridan Ave., Fort Myer, VA 20319



United Through Reading

United Through Reading is a non-profit with a mission to keep service members and veterans connected with their families when apart. Whether the separation is due to deployment, TDY or training exercises, everyone can be a part of the bedtime routine. Service members record themselves reading a high-quality book at a UTR Story Station location, UTR community event or utilizing the free UTR app. Families are then sent a free copy of the same book so children may read the story along with the recording. Families can select picture books like Sandra Boynton's "Barnyard Dance" all the way to chapter books like Charles Dickens' "Christmas Carol." The biggest benefit of UTR's story recordings is that it allows children to access their parent (or uncle, grandma or adult sibling) any time they need, without the need to coordinate different time zones or poor internet connections. Visit the [website](#) to learn more.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Did you know you may be able to receive free, developmentally-appropriate books mailed to your home every month from your child's birth until age 5? Many community libraries, counties, and other charitable organizations across the United States have partnered with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to make sure children are exposed to high-quality books right from the start. To see if your current address is supported by the Imagination Library, check your zipcode at this [link](#).



Virtual EFMP Knowledge Nugget

Join us for bite size learning

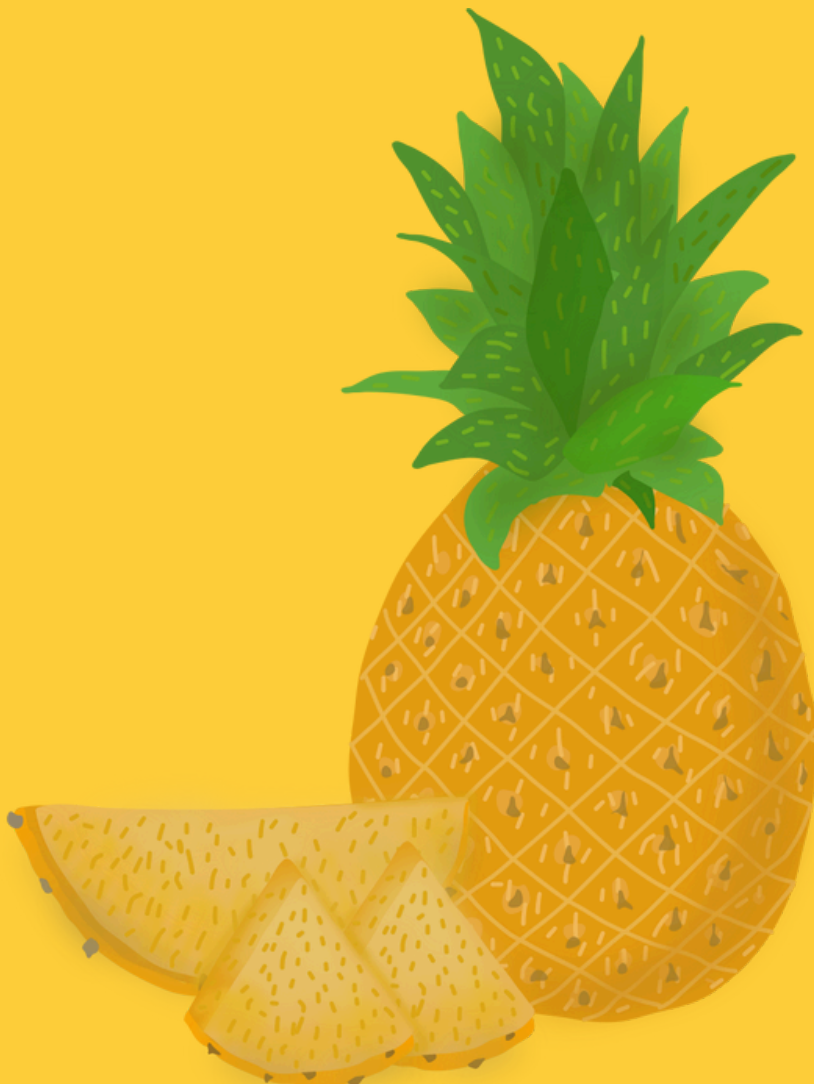
12 August , 1130-1200: Respite Care

Free to attend. Learn about the respite care reimbursement benefit available to eligible families through EFMP. Required to begin using the program at Henderson Hall.

26 August , 1130-1200: SSI SSDI & Medicaid

Free to attend. Learn about Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income including who qualifies and how to apply.

Contact us via email at: efmphh@usmc-mccs.org to register.



Virginia

Pathfinders for Autism- Wednesday Family Yoga

When: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 @4:30PM

What: Free, Virtual, Family Friendly Yoga on ZOOM ; must pre-register

Website: <https://pathfindersforautism.org/pfayoga/>

Sensory-Friendly Hours at the Arlington County Fair

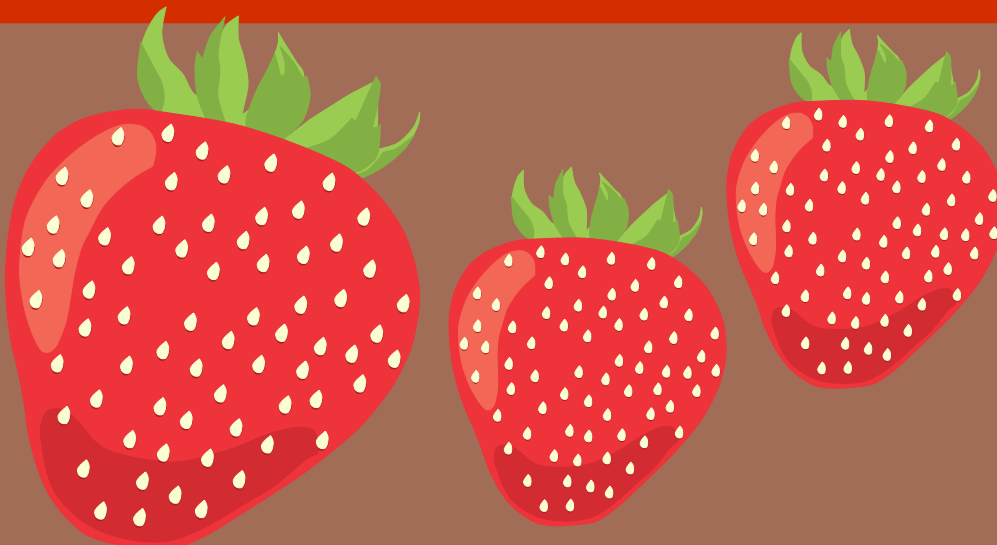
What: Enjoy a welcoming fair experience designed for neurodiverse guests—lower sound levels, no music, and a calming atmosphere.

Where: Arlington County Fair, Thomas Jefferson Community Center & Park, Arlington, VA

When:

- Sensory-Friendly Hours:
 - Saturday, August 16: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
 - Sunday, August 17: 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- Sensory Break Tent (Quiet Space):
 - Friday, August 15: 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
 - Saturday, August 16: 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
 - Sunday, August 17: 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Website: <https://arlingtoncountyfair.us/fair/sensory-tent/>



Maryland

Sensory Sundays – B&O Railroad Museum

When: Sunday, August 10, 2025, 10 AM–4 PM

What: A “Watermelon Weekend” edition with crafts, quiet train rides, low-lighting, and sensory kits. Included with general admission; museum members enter free; free for military

Website: <https://www.borail.org/events/sensory-sundays/>

Sensory-Friendly Neurodivergent Storytime – Odenton Library

When: Friday, August 15 10:30–11:30 AM

What: A calm, judgment-free storytime for preschool-aged children (0–5) on the autism spectrum or with sensory sensitivities.

Registration required, but free

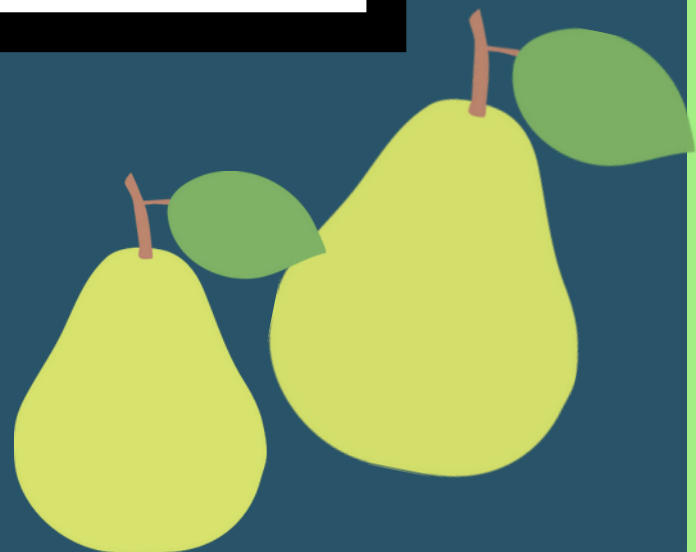
Website: <https://www.aacpl.net/event/sensory-friendly-neurodivergent-storytime-185770>

Make Your Own Fidget Toy – Deale Library

When: Tuesday, August 12, 4–5 PM

What: A free, DIY session for kids and teens to build their own fidget toys—great for sensory engagement

Website: <https://www.aacpl.net/event/make-your-own-fidget-toy-190554>



Sensory Friendly Activities across the NCR

LEGO Discovery Center Sensory-Friendly Mornings

\$26.99 per person. You may be eligible for one free ADA caregiver ticket. Enjoy the LEGO center from 1000-1100 with reduced lighting and music. This event is held the first Wednesday of every month. For all ages.

<https://www.legodiscoverycenter.com/washington-dc/whats-inside/events/sensory-friendly-mornings/>

Sensory Sundays at the B & O Rail Museum

\$20/adult, \$12/child. AD is free. First Sundays in select months. Environmental accommodations (no music, low lighting, quiet areas, increased signage for areas with sound effects), sensory-friendly events (kids craft, train ride, and tour) and resources (sensory kits, social stories, and community table) will be available.

<https://www.borail.org/events/sensory-sundays/>

Morning at the Museum

Free. Dates and Smithsonian museum vary. Registration required. Sensory-friendly program for children, teens, and young adults who are neurodivergent and their families. Participants enter the museum early and explore at their own pace.

<https://access.si.edu/program/morning-museum>

Alamo Drafthouse Cinema

Alamo for All program is active in both Northern VA and DC. All shows on Tuesday before 2:00 p.m. are sensory-friendly. Additional shows are available on weekends.

<https://drafthouse.com/program/alamo-for-all>

AMC Theatres

Second and fourth Saturdays for family-friendly movies and Wednesday evenings of every month offer sensory-friendly showings

<https://www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films>

Children's Museum of Virginia

Portsmouth, VA. Reduced number of visitors and adapted programs/exhibits. Held the second Sunday of every month.

<https://childrensmuseumvirginia.com/events>

Kennedy Center

Price varies. Lower lighting during entire performance, reduced sounds, and designated quiet area of theater. Guests are welcome to talk and move throughout performances. Website includes scripted stories to talk about an upcoming visit.

<https://www.kennedy-center.org/visit/accessibility/sensory>

Regal Movies

My Way Matinee Program offers sensory-friendly showings as the first show on Saturdays on select Saturdays.

<https://www.regmovies.com/promotions/my-way-matinee>

Philadelphia:

Sesame Place

Sesame Place Philadelphia is the first theme park to be designated as a Certified Autism Center. Sesame Place offers a low-sensory room, low-sensory parade viewing, and specially-trained staff.

<https://sesameplace.com/philadelphia/low-sensory-days/>

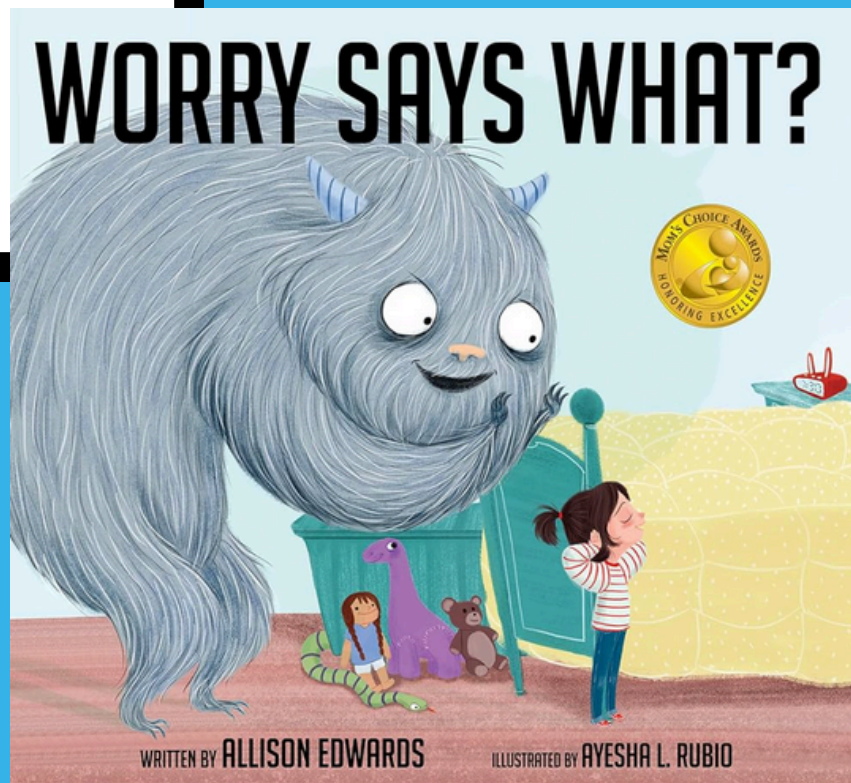
Empower and Help Worried Kids

Allison Edwards, author of the best-selling book *Why Smart Kids Worry*, gives a glimpse into the ways worry whispers to young minds, and offers a powerful tool all children can use to silence those fears.

"Worry's songs tie my tummy up in knots, and the things he says make my heart beat very fast. Sometimes he speaks in a whisper, and other times his voice gets so loud I can't hear anything else."

Worry and anxiety are currently the top mental health issues among children and teens. Children have a number of worries throughout childhood that will come and go.

The problem is not with the worries themselves, but that children believe the worries to be true. With a relatable story and beautiful artwork, *Worry Says What?* will help children (and adults) flip their thinking when anxious thoughts begin and turn them into powerful reminders of all they are capable of accomplishing.



To borrow this item or any of the other items in the loan locker, contact efmphh@usmc-mccs.org or call (703) 693-7195. You may schedule pick-up at Henderson Hall or at an upcoming EFMP site visit in your area

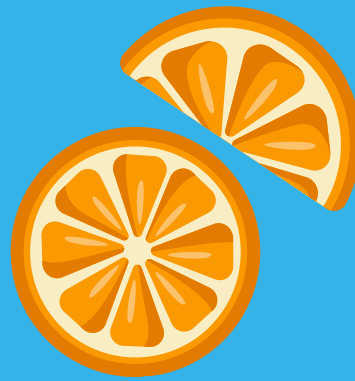


Who is eligible for the Exceptional Family Member Program?

An official family member with an exceptional medical or special education need, registered in DEERS, who resides with the active duty service member sponsor. This can include a spouse, child or dependent adult. It is mandatory (by MCO 1754.4C) that the Marine enroll a family member who has a special medical or educational needs. Contact your EFMP office if you are unsure if you should enroll a family member.

HH EFMP Services

- Family support/non-clinical case management
- Informal Assignment Screening
- EFMP Attorney Assistance
- Resources and Referrals
- Support at IEP/IFSP meetings
- Respite Care Reimbursement Program
- Eligibility and enrollment for Tricare ECHO
- Transition Assistance (PCS, EAS)
- Workshops and Training
- Lending Library
- Loan Locker
- Family Needs Assessment



DISCLAIMER:

The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of Defense, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, gift suggestions, or organizations imply endorsement by the USMC.

Henderson Hall EFMP is committed to providing accessible, inclusive events and services. Please contact us with concerns or suggestions

efmphh@usmc-mccs.org

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